



County of Los Angeles

CHIEF ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICE

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DAVID E. JANSSEN
Chief Administrative Officer

Board of Supervisors
GLORIA MOLINA
First District

YVONNE BRATHWAITE BURKE
Second District

ZEV YAROSLAVSKY
Third District

DON KNABE
Fourth District

MICHAEL D. ANTONOVICH
Fifth District

April 1, 2003

To: Supervisor Yvonne Brathwaite Burke, Chair
Supervisor Gloria Molina
Supervisor Zev Yaroslavsky
Supervisor Don Knabe
Supervisor Michael D. Antonovich

From: David E. Janssen
Chief Administrative Officer

FEDERAL LEGISLATIVE UPDATE

Pursuit of County Positions on Legislation

State Criminal Alien Assistance Program (SCAAP): Funding for SCAAP is one of the County's funding priorities included in the Federal Agenda adopted by your Board on February 4, 2003. **Based on this policy, the County's Washington advocates are pursuing \$315 million in added SCAAP funding in a Federal Fiscal Year (FFY) 2003 supplemental appropriations bill.** This increase is needed to restore SCAAP funding to its FFY 2002 level of \$565 million. The recently enacted omnibus FFY 2003 omnibus appropriations bill cut SCAAP funding by \$315 million to \$250 million. This cut will result in an estimated loss of \$126 million to the State of California and its counties, including a loss to the County of \$19 million.

Attached is a letter sent by Chair Burke on behalf of the Board to Senator Feinstein urging that \$315 million in added SCAAP funding be included in the FFY 2003 supplemental appropriations bill. Similar letters were sent to Senator Boxer, the County's Congressional Delegation, and Californians on the House Appropriations Committee. Our Washington advocates report that Representative Roybal-Allard, who serves on the Appropriations Committee, plans to offer an amendment to add \$315 million in SCAAP funds to the FFY 2003 supplemental appropriations bill when it is marked up in the Committee on April 1, 2003. They indicate that Senator Feinstein also will offer such an amendment when the Senate Appropriations Committee later marks up the bill.

Homeland Security: In addition to being a potential vehicle for increased SCAAP funding, the upcoming FFY 2003 supplemental appropriations bill also is a vehicle for increasing other homeland security funding. Based on Board policies supporting increased funding for homeland security activities, the County will pursue increased homeland security funding in the supplemental appropriations bill, including for first responders, bioterrorism activities (e.g. smallpox vaccinations), reimbursing increased local costs during periods of heightened terrorist alert status, and meeting security requirements in high threat urban areas.

The County's Washington advocates also will pursue a more equitable allocation of homeland security funding based on policies in the Board-adopted Federal Agenda. This includes pursuing needed changes to the Firefighting Grant Program. Under current law, firefighting funds are awarded through competitive grants. A fire department may receive no more than \$750,000 per year, which, in FFY 2003, represents 0.1 percent of the \$750 million in total Firefighting Grant funding.

This cap is not advantageous to large fire departments in urban areas where the threat of terrorism often is higher. For example, the County's Fire Department serves 3.9 million persons (or 1.37 percent of the total U.S. population) in 57 cities and unincorporated areas of the County. If funding were allocated solely based on population, the County would receive over \$10 million in FFY 2003 funds instead of no more than \$750,000. Current law also inequitably requires a 30 percent non-Federal share of costs for fire departments serving populations of 50,000 or more, but only a 10 percent cost share for those serving less than 50,000.

To correct these inequities and more efficiently allocate Firefighting Grant funds to local fire departments, our Washington advocates will recommend that:

- The \$750,000 a year funding cap be eliminated;
- Funds be allocated through per capita formula grants to large fire departments (e.g., those serving 300,000 or more persons) rather than through the more time-consuming and administratively costly competitive grant application process; and
- The non-Federal share of costs should be 10 percent for all fire departments without regard to population size.

First responder grant funds administered by the new Department of Homeland Security (DHS) also should be allocated more equitably among state and local governments. Due to a relatively high guaranteed funding level for low population states, California will receive only \$45 million (7.5 percent) of the nearly \$600 million in FFY 2003 first

Each Supervisor
April 1, 2003
Page 3

responder grant funds even though the State has about 12 percent of the total U.S. population. **The County's Washington advocates will pursue a more equitable allocation based on relative need, taking into account the risk of terrorism and potential terrorist targets in an area. We also will pursue direct allocations or the pass-through of at least 80 percent of first responder grant funds to counties.**

We will continue to keep you advised of any new developments.

DEJ:GK
MAL:MT:ib

Attachment

c: Executive Officer, Board of Supervisors
County Counsel
All Department Heads
Legislative Strategist



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March 31, 2003

The Honorable Dianne Feinstein
United States Senate
331 Hart Senate Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20510

Dear Senator Feinstein:

On behalf of the Los Angeles County Board of Supervisors, I am writing to urge your strong support for adding \$315 million in State Criminal Alien Assistance Program (SCAAP) funds to the upcoming Fiscal Year (FY) 2003 supplemental appropriations bill, which is intended to help finance the war in Iraq and homeland security. These added funds are needed to restore SCAAP funding to its FY 2002 level of \$565 million.

SCAAP is a critically important Federal program for funding law enforcement activities relating to homeland security in California. The State receives 40 percent of all SCAAP funds, nationally. Without its reimbursement of state and local costs of incarcerating criminal aliens, far less resources would be available for improving homeland security -- the top priority for law enforcement agencies that receive SCAAP funds in California.

Unfortunately, the recently enacted omnibus FY 2003 appropriations bill cut SCAAP funding by \$315 million to \$250 million -- a far lower funding level than past years. The resulting loss of about \$126 million in funding to California will have a devastating impact on efforts to improve homeland security in the State. It comes at a time when the State and its counties face major budget shortfalls, and cannot absorb a loss of such magnitude without reducing funding for homeland security and other essential public safety services.

Restoring SCAAP funds in the supplemental appropriations bill, therefore, is of critical importance for improving homeland security in California. It also is the most effective means for making more resources available to our State. California receives 40 percent of all SCAAP funds, but a far smaller share of funds under other programs relating to homeland security. For example, California received only \$45 million (7.5 percent) of the nearly \$600 million in FY 2003 first responder grant funds and 5.7 percent of all FY 2002 Firefighting Grant funds.

The Honorable Dianne Feinstein
April 2, 2003
Page 2

The County appreciates your past efforts in support of SCAAP funding and look forward to working together with you to restore FY 2003 SCAAP funding.

Sincerely,

YVONNE BRATHWAITE BURKE
Chair, Board of Supervisors
Supervisor, Second District